

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. **10/535,422**

Amendment filed July 16, 2009

Reply to OA dated March 24, 2009

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 8, 15 and 20 without prejudice or disclaimer, and amend claims 1 and 3, as follows. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently amended): A method for producing a stent expandable in outside diameter for living soft tissue having:

a melting step of producing a ferritic stainless steel tube substantially free of Ni by melting method,

a working step of working said ferritic stainless steel tube to have a repeating shape on the peripheral surface in expanded form to obtain the stent, and

a nitrogen absorption step of bringing said medical device body into contact with a gas containing nitrogen at a predetermined treatment temperature or more to make said ferritic stainless steel forming said medical device body absorb nitrogen to transform all of said ferritic stainless steel tube to austenite.

Claim 2 (Previously presented): The method of production of a stent as set forth in claim 1, wherein said ferritic stainless steel has as main ingredients Fe in an amount of 50 to 90 wt%, Cr and/or Mn in amounts of 10 to 30 wt%, and Mo and/or Ti in amounts of 0 to 10 wt%.

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Claim 3 (Currently amended): The method of production of [[a]] a stent as set forth in claim 1, wherein said ferritic stainless steel has as main ingredients Fe in an amount of 65 to 80 wt%, Cr and/or Mn in amounts of 15 to 25 wt%, and Mo and/or Ti in amounts of 0 to 5 wt%.

Claim 4 (Previously presented): The method of production of a stent as set forth in claim 1, wherein said treatment temperature is in a temperature range of 800 to 1500°C.

Claim 5 (Previously presented): The method of production of a stent as set forth in claim 1, wherein said treatment temperature is in the temperature range of 1100 to 1300°C.

Claim 6 (Previously presented): The method of production of a stent as set forth in claim 1, wherein said ferritic stainless steel is made to contain nitrogen in an amount of at least 0.5 wt%.

Claim 7 (Previously presented): The method of production of a stent as set forth in claim 1, wherein said ferritic stainless steel is made to contain nitrogen in an amount of at least 0.8 wt%.

Claims 8-10 (Canceled).

Claim 11 (Previously presented): The method of production of a stent as set forth in claim 2, wherein said treatment temperature is in a temperature range of 800 to 1500°C.

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Claim 12 (Previously presented): The method of production of a stent as set forth in claim 2, wherein said treatment temperature is in the temperature range of 1100 to 1300°C.

Claim 13 (Previously presented): The method of production of a stent as set forth in claim 2, wherein said ferritic stainless steel is made to contain nitrogen in an amount of at least 0.5 wt%.

Claim 14 (Previously presented): The method of production of a stent as set forth in claim 2, wherein said ferritic stainless steel is made to contain nitrogen in an amount of at least 0.8 wt%.

Claim 15 (Canceled).

Claim 16 (Previously presented): The method of production of a stent as set forth in claim 2, wherein all of said ferritic stainless steel is transformed to austenite.

Claim 17 (Canceled).

Claim 18 (Previously presented): The method of production of a stent as set forth in claim 1, wherein the working step comprises forming a metal tube of thickness 50 to 400 μm .

Claims 19-20 (Canceled).